

SAINT LOUIS BIRD CLUB BULLETIN

Official Organ of the Saint Louis Bird Club
for the Protection,
Enjoyment, Study, and Conservation of Birds

Volume 4

February 13, 1935

Number 2

THE FEBRUARY MEETING

The Bird Club is able to offer two outstanding events for this month. As a result, the regular meeting for February 20th will be postponed for a month and replaced by a talk which will be given us by Mr. Ganier, State ornithologist of Tennessee.

The meeting is planned for Saturday, February 23rd, at the Nurses' Home of the Jewish Hospital, 306 South Kingshighway, at 8:00 P. M.

Mr. Ganier is a very competent authority on the birds of the Mississippi and has a message of interest to every member of our Bird Club as well as all who have any interest in birds at all. His topic will deal with the breeding habits of water birds.

While in Saint Louis, Mr. Ganier will lead two bird walks, one on Saturday, February 23rd, at Ranken, and the other on Sunday, February 24th, at Creve Coeur. All members of our Bird Club, members of the Webster Groves Nature Study Society, and all others interested in birds are cordially invited to participate in these hikes.

The other outstanding event of the month will be a talk at Soldan High School by Dr. Harry Oberholzer, head of the Biological Survey, under the joint sponsorship of the Saint Louis Bird Club, the Webster Groves Nature Study Society, and the Izaak Walton League. The talk is of course open to the general public and all

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THE RARE SANDHILL CRANE

To see this bird is a privilege the true bird lover would sacrifice for little. Owing to its increasing rarity, however, the opportunity comes but seldom, and to be intimately acquainted with this stately creature is the privilege of as many people perhaps as may be counted on your hand.

The species occurs in two forms, the Sandhill Crane (*Grus mexicana*) formerly found throughout North America, but now greatly restricted in range and number, and the Little Brown Crane, (*Grus Canadensis*) the northern and more western species.

Little is known of its food habits and life. It spends much of its time on dry land and on the treeless marshes feeding largely on corn and tubers. It is migratory, spending its winters in the southern part of the United States, the Gulf States, and south to Mexico, and has bred locally throughout its range, recently only in Wisconsin, Michigan, and Canada.

The Sandhill Crane is remarkable for its wild eerie cry which is said to be of even more uncanny quality than that of the Loon. Like the Loon its tremolo call carries to a great distance, being heard even after the bird is out of sight.

Motion pictures of its spring mating dance were made a few years ago in Burnett County, Wisconsin.

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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

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THIS IS YOUR BULLETIN

) A bird club such as yours which boasts among its ranks so many outstanding bird students of the Saint Louis region, makes accurate and numerous observations during the course of the year which deserve publication in your bulletin.

One of the outstanding purposes for which the bulletin was begun and for which it is being continued is to list the observations made by bird club members and pass them on to fellow members.

Accordingly your editor will give space to all observations which are sent to him and will keep the bird club members informed on the birds observed on the various hikes which are planned for the coming spring.

It need not be emphasized again that a list of ten (or less) common birds accurately identified possesses much more value than a list of twenty birds whose identifications may be a little doubtful.

This issue of the bulletin is the first one of a new year of activity and I hope the succeeding numbers will contain much information and many ideas that will stimulate the interest and activities of the members of the club as they have in the past.

This year should be an important one for us with the many activities and opportunities that are opening before us. The Government is buying land for sanctuaries and for preserves and it is up to us to aid in as many ways as we can. All of us are supposed to keep awake and to bring forth any suggestions that might be of benefit along those lines.

It will soon be time to start our Spring Bird Walks and I am desirous of making this year's walks more successful than those of any other year.

There is going to be a big demand for leaders on these walks and the known supply is very limited. It is good training for any one to attempt to tell others how to recognize the various species of birds for in so doing you more firmly fix the species in your own mind and it makes you more observant. For this reason more of our members should act as leaders on these trips and so do not be surprised if you are called upon to perform the act this spring.

As a beginning Mr. Stuart O'Byrne is conducting a beginner's class in the Park each Saturday morning from 7:30 to 9:00. I most heartily urge each and every one who wants to start to learn our birds to attend this class.

THE RARE SANDHILL CRANE
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This crane, although exceedingly wary and guarded in its movements, cannot scope successfully with the modern armed hunter.

As a result its numbers have been so seriously depleted that Aldo Leopold, University of Wisconsin game management expert, in a recent article in the Milwaukee Journal, was able to write that there remain in the entire country but twenty-five pairs of this species of which Wisconsin shelters perhaps the majority.

Accordingly measures have been taken which may save the bird from extinction. About 30,000 acres of central Wisconsin marginal land have been purchased by federal relief agencies in a range which should prove ideal for the Sandhill Crane. This area is linked with the state restoration and reforestation projects and should enable the Sandhill Crane to survive if it is given the absolute protection it deserves. r.a.d

He: Poor Harry was struck and killed by a revolving crane!

She:(Just recently from England) My, my, what fierce birds you must have in America!

THE FEBRUARY MEETING
(continued from front page)
are cordially invited to attend. Dr. Oberholzer will speak Thursday, February 28th, at 8:15 P.M. He will discuss the present waterfowl situation in the United States, and material pertaining thereto.

REVIEWS

The Hawks of North America, their field identification and feeding habits, by Dr. John B. May. Price \$1.25, postpaid. Published by National Association of Audubon Societies, 1775 Broadway, New York.

For the first time in any book every species of Hawk occurring in North America is treated in color plates. The volume contains 41 plates by Allan Brooks and Roger Tory Peterson.

"Range maps are included as a visual index to the distribution of all native species of Hawks.

"The text is an authoritative guide to field identification, and contains detailed and recent material on feeding habits.

"All money received from the sale of this book will be spent solely for the expenses of the Association's campaign for Hawk and Owl protection.

"Delivery on orders will be made about April 1."

Webster Groves Nature Notes of February has the following concerning the waterfowl situation in Missouri:

"The following paragraphs are quoted from a letter received by Mr. S. P. Jones from Mr. E. L. Preston, Secretary and Director of Publicity, Missouri Game and Fish Department.

"Today the breeding areas for waterfowl in Missouri are confined largely to Mississippi and adjoining southeast Missouri lowland counties and Saint Charles County, although scattered nests may be found during the breeding season along the Mississippi and Missouri lowlands elsewhere in the state. Missouri has not been unlike her sister states

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A TRIP TO CALIFORNIA

January 21 - St. Louis, Mo., to Lebanon, Mo., via Columbia and Bagnell Dam. Temperature approximately 0° all day.

Northern shrike (?), horned lark, Lapland longspur, E. sparrow hawk, Cooper's hawk, marsh hawk, red-tailed hawk, A. rough-legged Hawk (black phase), E. cardinal, slate-colored junco, E. crow, W. blue jay, W. flicker, English sparrow, starling. (15 species)

January 22 - Lebanon, Mo., to McAlester, Okla., via Joplin and Vinita. Temperature below 32°.

Mourning dove, meadowlark, horned lark, red-tailed hawk, marsh hawk, E. cardinal, migrant shrike, E. sparrow hawk, English sparrow, starling, crow, junco, flicker. (14 species)

January 24 - Abilene, Texas to El Paso, Texas. Temperature fairly cold but not freezing.

Meadowlark, white-rumped shrike, white-necked raven (abundant east of Big Springs, Texas, and found only there), house finch, mourning dove, mockingbird, white-crowned sparrow, Sprague's pipit, marsh hawk, English sparrow, sparrow hawk, green-backed goldfinch, Harris' hawk, scaled quail, road-runner, Lawrence's goldfinch, red-tailed hawk, desert horned lark, red-shouldered hawk, golden eagle (dead). (21 species)

January 25 - El Paso, Texas to Tucson, Arizona. Warm, sunny, and windless all day.

Clay-colored sparrow, white-crowned sparrow, Harris' hawk, Brewer's blackbird, English sparrow, sparrow hawk, white-necked raven, Apolomado falcon, mountain bluebird, mourning dove, marsh hawk, red-tailed hawk, desert horned lark, McCown's longspur (?), horned owl. (15 species) Excellent observation of the horned (continued next column)

owl was had. The bird was perched on a giant cactus in the desert just before dark.

January 26 - Tucson, Ariz. to Gila Bend, Ariz. Observations were largely made in the vicinity of Tucson. Temperature above 80°, hot sun, no wind.

Bendire's thrasher, rock wren, red-shafted flicker, Baird's sparrow (?), McCown's longspur (?), desert sparrow hawk, desert horned lark (?), white-crowned sparrow, Castan's kingbird, killdeer, pintail, green-winged teal, Cal. shrike, lazuli bunting (?), mourning dove, English sparrow. (16 species)

January 27 - Gila Bend, Arizona, to Yuma, Ariz. - Practically the same as above.

January 28 - Yuma, Arizona. Warm and windless.

American egret, great blue heron, shoveller, green-winged teal, killdeer, sanderling, white-crowned sparrow, Bendire's thrasher, desert sparrow hawk, desert horned lark, W. crow, W. bluebird, English sparrow, Brewer's blackbird, mourning dove, W. meadowlark. (16 species)

January 29 - Yuma, Arizona, to Mojave, California. Warm, windy, and fair.

American egret, road-runner, herring (?) gull, long-billed curlew, ash-throated flycatcher, desert sparrow hawk, desert horned lark, Brewer's blackbird, W. crow, black-headed grosbeak, turkey vulture, California shrike, W. meadowlark, W. mourning dove, W. mockingbird. (17 species)

January 30 - Mojave, Cal., to Merced, Cal.

W. bluebird, marsh hawk, W. red-tailed hawk, Lewis' wood-pecker, white-crowned sparrow, horned lark, desert sparrow hawk, prairie falcon, Calif. shrike, W. crow, ? raven, house finch, English sparrow, W. meadowlark, Bendire's (continued on next page)

A TRIP TO CALIFORNIA
(continued from previous page)

thrasher, W. mourning dove, W. mockingbird, killdeer.
(18 species)

January 31 - Merced, Cal., to San Rafael, Cal., via San Francisco Bay Ferry.

Marsh hawk, W. red-tailed hawk, song sparrow, W. lark sparrow, W. bluebird, W. meadowlark, turkey vulture, W. gull (?), herring (?) gull, W. mourning dove, W. mockingbird, desert sparrow hawk, (?) horned lark, bi-colored red-wing, Brewer's blackbird, California shrike, W. crow, white-crowned sparrow, house finch, English sparrow, red-shafted flicker, surf scoter, W. grebe, Holboell's grebe, W. robin, Oregon junco, yellow palm warbler, slender-billed nuthatch, Cal. woodpecker, Sierra hermit thrush, (?) kinglet, plain tit-mouse. (32 species)

by Tom Kikkay

(Editor's note: We are all more than sorry to lose to California one of our most energetic and enthusiastic bird students. We are sure that he will continue his outstanding efforts at his new home and hope to be able to print reports similar to the above from time to time. His new address is Hamilton Field, San Rafael, California.)

BIRD SANCTUARY AT BOULDER DAM

Sportsmen as well as conservationists, since the two should be synonymous, will be glad to know that the entire reservoir formed by the huge Boulder dam together with much of the surrounding territory has been made a bird sanctuary for the protection chiefly of wild ducks. The birds are expected to fly to Boulder dam in vast numbers as to an oasis in a desert. There they will receive supervised protection.

"Spring brings us in a closer proximity to Nature than any other season of the year. We see green life upspringing from apparently lifeless branches. We witness the love season of the avian creatures and note the return of the birds from the Southland.

"Now is the time for the bird lover to make preparation for this most wonderful season. In this respect I have reference to building homes for wild birds. If you have done your work well this spring you will experience a peace of mind, a satisfaction, which comes only to those who ardently love birds.

"By my boyhood endeavors and failings in bird house construction, I feel that I have gained knowledge which may be helpful to the amateur.

"...the bird most known to utilize man-made nesting sites is the Purple Martin.

"It is believed that long before the advent of white men to this country, martins nested in hollow trees. In some instances they still do. We have learned that in early ages Indians hung up gourds about their fields to encourage these birds. Martins ward off predatory and destructive birds. The Indians, knowing this, took advantage of the fact. Through long usage of boxes, these birds have become almost wholly dependent on man for nesting sites. Today, many Martins do not raise families because they do not find a ready prepared home.

"The English Sparrow is the greatest enemy that the Martin has...This Sparrow...will nest practically anywhere, consequently it takes advantage of man-made houses, too. When the Martins return, they cannot find a place to nest, and,

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SOME HELPFUL SUGGESTIONS
TO BIRDHOUSE BUILDERS
(continued from previous page)

if by chance, some do, they have to up war warfare against these sparrows for weeks, months, or possibly the entire nesting season. It is the duty of those owning boxes to keep sparrows' nests torn out until the Martins have returned and taken possession of them.

"Any kind of well sheltered and well ventilated box will do. It is imperative that the entrance be at least four inches above the floor. This is to prevent the sparrows from pushing the Martin eggs from the nest. It is also necessary to have a small perch before the entrance. In some instances success has been had with bird hotels, but from my personal experience I have learned that Martins prefer to nest in pairs.

"An eaved house 8"x8"x8", ventilated in the gable ends and having a $1\frac{1}{2}$ " diameter entrance, is sufficient to house one brood of birds. A hinged door is a necessity to permit cleaning after each nesting season. Do not use metal for bird houses. In summer the heat from the sun will kill the birds.

"If this is your first year to have Martin houses it is advisable to erect them in an open spot, approximately 15' above ground. Martins will not occupy homes suspended from trees. They must be on a pole.

"Once these birds raise a brood in a locality they will return year after year to the scene of their nesting, accompanied by their offspring. This makes it necessary to increase the number of houses annually until you have as many as you want.

"Under protection Martins become relatively tame and if
(continued next column)

you choose, you may lower the houses after the first nesting season to allow a closer observation of the birds.

"Poles supporting boxes should have a broad galvanized metal strap (approximately $1\frac{1}{2}$ " in width) around them, to prevent robbery by cats.

"There are other birds..that will nest in houses, such as the Woodpecker family, Bluebirds, certain species of Owls, Carolina Wrens, etc.

"These birds are timid and require some careful coaxing and strategy on the part of the bird house builder. Their houses should resemble nature as close as possible. For instance, a Woodpecker house should have the appearance of a hollow log, and must be attached to the trunk of a tree. A Bluebird's home may be of any design. It is advisable to suspend it from a strong branch and have it painted some protective color. Foreign odors are repellent to birds. Make sure to paint houses sufficiently early in order that the paint smell may vanish before nesting season.

"It is time to build houses now. You may erect them as early as February. If you have a country home it will be a simple task to turn that idle lawn into an exquisite bird sanctuary."--Quoted from Louisiana Conservation Review January, 1935.

WATERFOWL IN MISSOURI
(continued from page 9)
in the inconsiderable treatment accorded her waterfowl. Missouri's hunters enjoy waterfowl shooting in spite of and not because of what has been done to provide food, resting and breeding places for game migrants. Three of the twenty-two former outstanding breeding and feeding places in America which are now drained, were located in Missouri. Today, the drainage
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WATERFOWL IN MISSOURI
 (continued from previous page)
 of these areas is pointed out as an important factor in decreasing waterfowl supply. The three principal Missouri areas which were drained are Little River, 41,000 acres; Mingo Swamp, 25,000 acres; and Squaw Creek bottoms, 31,000 acres.....

"Because Missouri's natural resources originally appeared almost unlimited, little has been done until recently to conserve them, at least by what we would term intelligent methods. Forests have been depleted, game and fish have suffered from commercial exploitation, and stream pollution and land erosion have done much damage.

"The water resources of the state are quite important. There are 16,000 miles of streams and more than 800 square miles of water area in the lakes and streams within its borders. The largest addition to the water resources was made four years ago by the building of the Bagnell dam on the Osage, creating the Lake of the Ozarks, a 61,000 acre lake.

"The Union Electric Co., builders, of the huge dam, are making some effort at restoring breeding grounds on the lake. At a point west of Warsaw on Hoggles Creek, a 25,000 acre sanctuary has been established, where the waterfowl are permitted to nest and feed without interference from hunters and tourists. It was reported that about 500 ducks nested there this year, but we haven't received any reports as to what the results were.

"Missouri's state park and refuge system includes 75,000 acres of owned or leased land dedicated to the propagation and protection of the state's wild life.

"Except for the efforts of the State Game and fish de-

(Continued next column)

partment to enforce present regulations pertaining to waterfowl, little is being done to provide feeding, resting, or breeding grounds in Missouri.

"A scattered few shooting clubs have established sanctuaries near their shooting grounds and some have rest hours and days during the season, but these are virtually the only special protective measures being taken. There are yet many areas in Missouri which would provide resting areas for migratory birds, providing sections closed to shooting were established. Now under state control are the areas, Big Lake in Holt County and the Vanmeter tract in Saline County, which offer possibilities as sanctuaries."

"Great tracts are not necessary for satisfactory resting grounds, and an effort is now being made by the U. S. Biological Survey and other conservation organizations to encourage the establishment of small areas in this state and other."

NEW BIRD CLUB MEMBERS

Jennie Wahlert, 2918 Harper
 Alma Fletcher, Congress Hotel
 Wm. Gallagher, 118 Woodbine,
 Kirkwood

MOCKINGBIRD CONTEST

Plans are being made to record the voice of the "Sweetest singing mockingbird in Dixie" by the Cornell-American Museum expedition which is leaving this month for the south to record the songs and calls of birds.

This expedition will include Louisiana in its itinerary, where Dr. Arthur A. Allen and Albert R. Brand will attempt to record the voices of the rarer birds which are making their last stand in that state. An elaborate recording sound truck will be used.

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LIST OF BIRD WALKS PLANNED BY THE BIRD CLUB FOR THE COMING SPRING

February 23....Ranken Area See announcement on first page
February 24....Creve Coeur See announcement on first page
March 30.....Forest Park....Leave Jefferson Memorial at 6:00 A. M.
Leave Art Museum at 7:00 A. M.
March 31.....Forest Park... Leave Jefferson Memorial at 6:00 A. M.
Leave Art Museum at 7:00 A. M.
April 6.....Shaw's Garden..Leave Flora and Tower Grove Avenues
at 6:00 A. M.
April 6.....Forest Park....Leave Jefferson Memorial at 6:00 A. M.
Leave Art Museum at 7:00 A. M.
April 6.....O'Fallon Park..Leave Broadway entrance to the
Bellefontaine Cemetery at 6:00 A. M.
April 7.....Forest Park....Same Schedule as above.
April 7.....Carondelet.....Leave the hollow at the Grand and
Holly Hills viaduct at 6:00 A. M.
April 13.....O'Fallon Park..Same schedule as above.
April 13.....Shaw's Garden..Same schedule as above.
April 13.....Forest Park....Same schedule as above.
April 14.....Forest Park....Same schedule as above.
April 20.....O'Fallon Park..Same schedule as above.
April 20.....Shaw's Garden..Same schedule as above.
April 20.....Forest Park....Same schedule as above.
April 21.....Carondelet.....Same achedule as above.
April 21.....Forest Park....Same schedule as above.
April 28.....Bonhomme and
Delmar.....Leave at 6:00 A. M.
May 4.....Creve Coeur....The annual spring hike.
May 5.....Creve Coeur....The annual spring hike.

Any suggestions bird club members may have to make relevant to the above schedule may be sent to Dr. Hetler, 424 East Big Bend Blvd. Dr. Hetler also requests that all those who would care to lead groups at any of the above places or on any of the above dates communicate with him as soon as possible. There is a particular need for helpers on the Forest Park Walks. It is advisable that groups be divided into as few individuals as possible and assistance in leadership will be greatly appreciated.

In addition to the above walks, weekly Saturday morning walks for beginners in bird study will be held in Forest Park, starting Saturday, February 9th, from 7:30 to 9 o'clock. Everyone over seventeen years of age is welcome.... and the walks are free to everyone. The group will meet at Jefferson Memorial, rain or shine.

This affords an opportunity to get acquainted with the winter birds and the migrants from the south that will soon begin to arrive. Bring field glasses and a small bird book if you have them.

These beginners' walks will be led by Mr. Stuart O'Byrne and are sponsored by the Saint Louis Bird Club.

Joe E. Green & Wilbur C. Butford see 23 line 13 you is wrong

4th word